



Best Evidence 2015/16

The past few weeks have been rather busy on all fronts and you are all probably still reeling from getting in maize, especially with the yields seen in the local area. Both Phillipa and Tamsin have been to specific cattle conferences in the last fortnight. With Phillipa at the British Cattle Vets Conference and Tamsin at the European equivalent we have picked up all the latest developments, research and products in the bovine veterinary world. It's important to make farm decisions using the best evidence available and so over the next few months we will publish the best picks from both conferences that we feel can have a true impact at farm level. Let's see how much we can remember!!

European Conference – Anti-Inflammatory Use

Stress and pain levels around calving can have long term effects on performance in the entire lactation. Difficult or assisted calvings create very high pain responses in cows but they are often not given an anti-inflammatory treatment as farm staff do not deem it be a painful process. Pain responses influence hormone levels, dry matter intake and return to cycling and therefore increase culling rate. This study found that cows

given a non steroidal anti-inflammatory treatment within 12 to 24 hours of calving had much higher milk and protein yield for their entire lactation. The higher yields and longevity covered the cost of the treatment easily.

FARM LEVEL IMPACT: Use a NSAID treatment course (Finadyne/Metacam/Ketofen 10%) in cows with difficult/assisted calvings as well as sick animals within 12 to 24 hours to boost returns.

Practice Meeting - Selective Dry Cow Therapy

It was great to see so many of you at the KPI meeting on selective dry cow therapy and hopefully you enjoyed the evening. As an industry we are under great pressure to demonstrate responsible antibiotic use and with one major dairy asking for change, it won't be long before others follow suit.

The key take home messages are:

- ALL dry cows benefit from the use of an internal teat sealant – natural keratin plugs don't form in the majority of cows
- Farms need individual assessment and specific SDCT protocols but all require 3 basic criteria:
 - Bulk Tank Somatic Cell Counts
 - Accurate Clinical Mastitis Records
 - Farm specific important bacteria

Don't go it alone!

Discuss with one of us your options and take the opportunity to improve farm udder health.

Winter Housing – Pneumonia Treatments

In last month's newsletter we published the table of vaccines to help choose the right vaccination for each farm. However, for two of the vaccines it seems I muddled the waters a little. I have (hopefully) clarified the protocol below:

Bovilis IBR

- Primary course of one vaccine from 3 months old i/m or i/nasal route to give 6 months protection.
- If primary course from 2 weeks to 3 months old, use intranasal route only and revaccinate once 3-4 months old

Rispoval 4

- Primary course of 2 doses 3-4 weeks apart from 3 months old i/m route to give 6 months protection
- If primary course started from 3 weeks old then revaccinate over 3 months old

On the Pneumonia Thread:

Clinical cases of pneumonia are starting to rise again especially with the move towards housing cattle and the damp foggy days of November. The use of 'specific' pneumonia treatments is expensive so needs to be targeted. Remember the figures from the last newsletter? – a case of pneumonia costs up to £63 per ill animal and £30 for animals in the same group. To successfully target animals we need to grade the disease:

Stage 1 - Coughing only

- 1 - Observe and monitor closely – no treatment

Stage 2 - Cough + Temperature of 39.5°C or over. No other signs

- 1 - NSAID treatment (finadyne or metacam)
- 2 - Broad spectrum antibiotic treatment (Alamycin LA 1ml/10kg)

Stage 3 - Cough + Temperature of 39.5°C or over + any 1 of the following:

Heavy breathing/ Fast breathing/ Reluctance to drink milk or not finish feed/ Sweaty back / Droopy ears/ Depressed/ Sunken eyes/ Skin tent

- 1 - NSAID treatment (finadyne or metacam)
- 2 - Specific antibiotic treatment (table below)
- 3 - Add electrolyte (Rehydion gel) to milk feeds at either end of the day (bag feed if necessary)
- 4 - 2 Litres of water with electrolyte (Rehydion or lectade plus) at lunchtime (bag if necessary)
- 5 – Assess the rest of the group for affected animals

Isolate ill calves where possible to reduce risk of further spread

If >10% of the group in that air space are coughing with temperature (Stage 2 or above) then blanket treat the entire group with broad antibiotic (Alamycin LA)

Antibiotic	Cost	Cost per 150kg calf	Duration of action
Micotil (Vet Only use)	£88.36/50ml	£8.50	4 days
Resflor (Includes Finadyne)	£68.98/100ml	£12.20	4 Days
Zactran	£170.14 /100ml	£10.20	15 days
Alamycin LA	£14.23/100ml	£2.13	3 days
Anti-Inflammatory			
Metacam	£46.93/50ml	£3.43	3 days
Finadyne	£28.07/100ml	£1.87	1 day

These different medicines target different pathogens, so speak to us about choices as well as any treatment you don't feel have worked on your farm before.

Anti-inflammatory injections are essential in treating pneumonia and reduces the amount of lung tissue that gets damaged and encourages the calves to drink and eat sooner – vital!

Reminder

Ordering Medicines

Please ring ahead in plenty of time when ordering medicines to collect/to be delivered on your next visit. At weekends all drugs have to be authorised by the large animal vet on duty so please ring to order them on a weekday even for collection at the weekend to stop you from waiting until the duty vet is free!

News

TB Testing

We have recently increased our testing capacity even further with the addition of a second tester. Marta has already been out on farm over the last fortnight and you will meet her over the coming months. Please still give us plenty of notice when booking in testing